



# DEBRA BOWEN

## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Shannan Velayas  
(916) 653-6575

### June Primary Voting Begins Monday

**SACRAMENTO** – While Election Day isn't until June 5, millions of Californians who opt for the convenience of voting by mail can begin casting their ballots as early as Monday.

"When your mailbox is your polling place you can vote any time in the comfort of your own home," said Secretary of State Debra Bowen, the state's chief elections officer. "With so many voters choosing to vote by mail, Election Day is more like election month. However, no matter how you vote, make sure your county elections office receives your ballot by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day because postmarks don't count."

County elections officials will begin mailing vote-by-mail ballots as early as May 7; ballots have already been mailed to military and overseas voters. Beginning Monday, vote-by-mail voters can cast their June 5 ballots through the mail, drop them off at any polling place within the voter's county or vote in person at county elections offices. Once county elections officials determine the signature on the vote-by-mail ballot return envelope matches the voter's signature on his or her voter registration form, and the voter did not vote elsewhere in the same election, the ballot and the envelope are separated and the ballot is counted. All valid vote-by-mail ballots are counted in every election, regardless of the outcome or closeness of any race.

Any California voter may vote by mail. The last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot is May 29. A registered voter may request a ballot by using the application printed on the back of the sample ballot booklet mailed by the county elections office, or obtain an application online at [www.sos.ca.gov/elections/vote-by-mail/pdf/fill-in-vote-by-mail-app-instruct.pdf](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/vote-by-mail/pdf/fill-in-vote-by-mail-app-instruct.pdf).

Vote-by-mail voting has steadily increased in popularity over the last 34 years since the law was changed to allow any registered voter to vote by mail. Ballots cast by mail comprised 48.4 percent of all ballots in the November 2010 gubernatorial election. Nearly 58 percent of ballots cast in the June 2010 statewide primary were vote-by-mail ballots. In the May 19, 2009, Statewide Special Election, a record 62.2 percent of voters cast their ballots by mail.

The last day to register to vote in the June 5 primary election is May 21. Californians can fill out the Secretary of State's online voter registration form at [www.sos.ca.gov/elections/register-to-vote](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/register-to-vote) then just print, sign and mail it. (The form is even pre-addressed to the registrant's county elections office.) Californians can also pick up a voter registration form at any U.S. post office, public library or county elections office.

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